3:Chao E-5 (1939-1941)1948 AF12 North China AF12

geomancer is consulted before the arrangement of the union of a man with a woman is decided. Shortly before the bride steps into the bridal chair, certain magical acts should be performed to drive away the evil spirits. After the wedding, the bride is led to the ancestral tomb so as to inform the spirits that a new member has been added to the family.

Illness and death are human sorrows. When a person is ill, his wife or her children, in addition to procuring medicine, proceed to a temple to burn incense before the gods. Death is a calamity; particularly so is the death of the main supporter of the family. When a person is dead, his relatives from near and far come to share the sorrow of his family, together with his friends and non-clan members of the village.

The degree of elaboration of a death ceremony, as in marriage, varies in direct proportion with the financial condition of the family. There is, however, one thing common to the ceremonies of all families and that is their magico-religious nature. Performances have to be made to send the spirit away from the dead body. The spirit has to be guaranteed the ability to reach "heaven" through "hell". The family members have to be assured that they will not be disturbed by the spirit of the dead.

In the field of agriculture, water and wind and insect pests may destroy the plants and the crops. While some of these outside dangers can be put under the farmer's control, there are many that he feels he cannot deal with. He is not quite willing to leave everything to fate and luck until gods have failed him. His mule-carts and working-animals have to be protected from evil spirits. He or his wife or one of his children has to burn incense before the gods at regular intervals of the year or month to thank them for the protection to human labor, to animals, to carts and to crops.

P'ing-chiao-tsun has a temple, but no collective worship has been carried on during recent years. No monk resides in the village temple. In case a monk is needed, he can be called to serve from temples in the neighboring villages. Many gods in the village are no longer popular, but *niang-niang* 娘娘, the goddess, is still functioning. Women pray to her for sons and later for protection of these sons.

A family may worship the gods in the house of residence. Peculiarly enough, only a few families have ancestral tablets. Ancestral worship is not popular in P'ing-chiao-tsun. Of all the house-